



Proposed Redevelopment of upper floors
of the former Monkey House: 1 -3 Union
Terrace & 146 Union Street

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1.0: INTRODUCTION

1.1: SITE APPRAISAL

The former Monkey House is a prominent building in the streetscape of Union Terrace & Union Street, overlooking Union Terrace Gardens. It holds a confident and refined series of granite frontages to its principal elevations on the terrace and Union St. Its location is prime, finding itself in the middle of a focussed effort to revitalise the city centre of Aberdeen, with notably a series of major works ongoing in Union Terrace Gardens.

The South elevation facing Union Street - the city's principal retail and commercial thoroughfare gives the buildings access to all the major amenities associated with the city centre including close proximity to the cities major transport links. This position both aesthetically and geographically within the city make it a prime opportunity for a considered residential development on the upper floors.



Fig1: Location

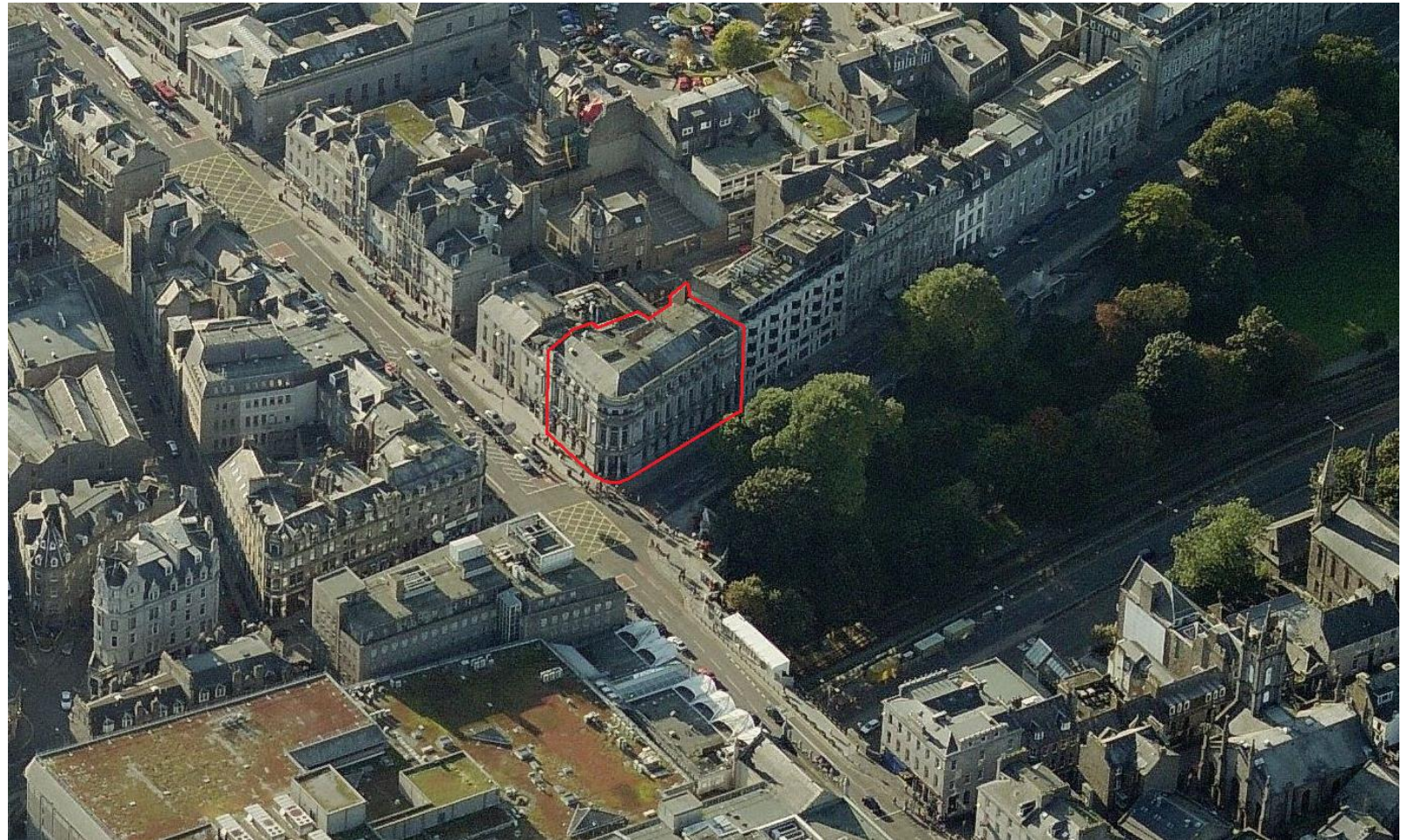


Fig2: Aerial photograph 2012

1.0: INTRODUCTION

1.2: SITE HISTORY

The building appears on historic maps post 1800, Northern Insurance as they came to be known acquired the site at 1 Union Terrace in 1881. The site was to be occupied by Northern Insurance until its acquisition by Commercial Union in 1968 at which point the building became the home of Commercial Union in Aberdeen.

In 2012 a third floor modern extension was constructed to provide more office floor space featuring full height curtain walls and a flat roof.

The ground floor is currently occupied by Chaopraya, a Thai restaurant. Previously occupied by the Monkey House pub.

This central location and flexibility of layout ensured the property was in occupation for the past years, however following the economic downturn and now availability of new office space within Aberdeen City and its surroundings the property has remained vacant for some time and proves to be no longer fit for purpose.



Fig3: Historic Photograph

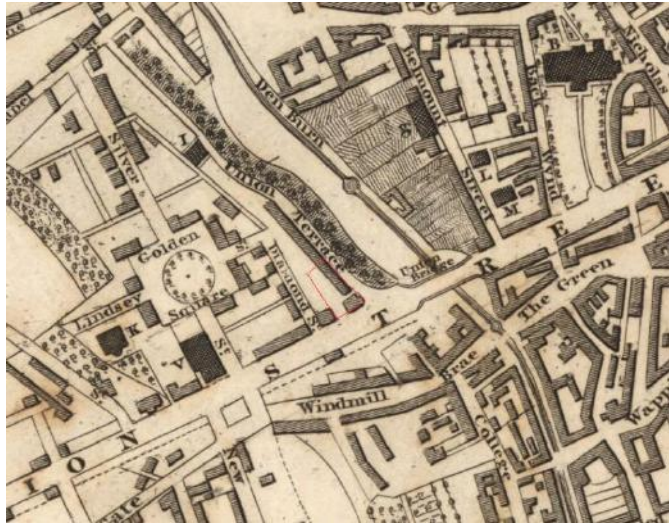


Fig4: A map of site (1780)

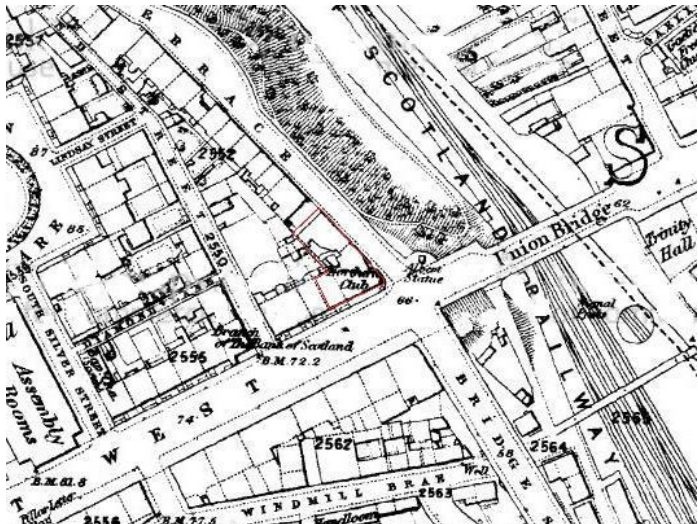


Fig5: A map of site (1868)

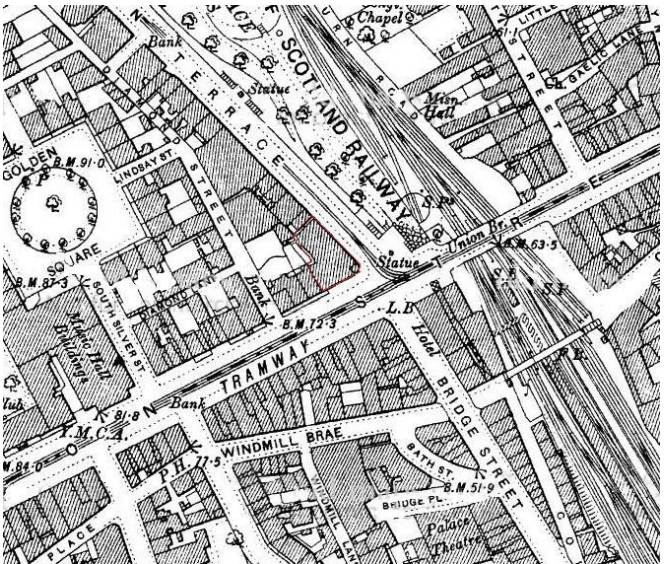


Fig6: A map of site (1901)

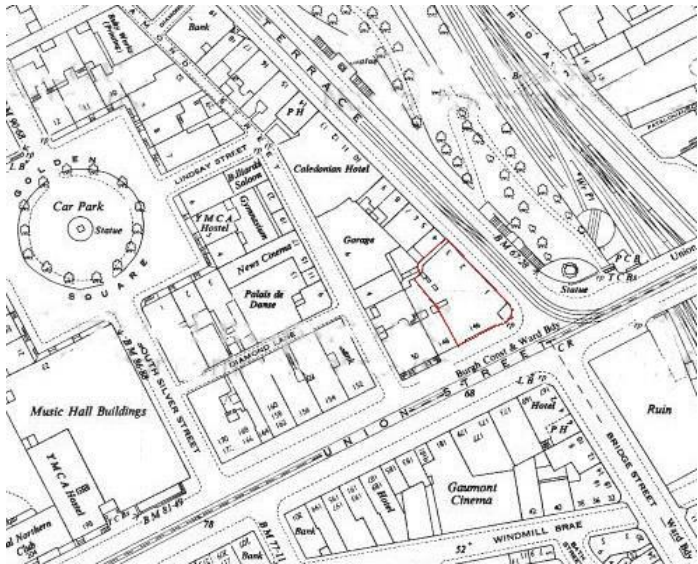


Fig7: A map of site (1955)

1.0: INTRODUCTION

1.4: EXISTING SITE & BUILDING

The building was constructed by Marshall Mackenzie (Matthews & Mackenzie) in a Renaissance style with 3-storeys. There are 4-windows facing Union Street and 7 window facing Union Terrace. The ground floor has banded pulvination, with doric columns at the curved corner entry this is coupled with Ionic columns at 1st floor level and with consoles over at 2nd floor level.

The third floor level comprises of full height modern curtain walls with steel support columns, a flat roof, a suspended floor and ceilings.

The upper floors have sat vacant for a number of years. During this time the property has not been heated and subject to limited maintenance resulting in it starting to show some signs of deterioration. Notably to the top floor walls and ceilings as well as some of the existing timber windows.



Fig8: Typical Interior space – second floor



Fig9: Typical Interior space – second floor



Fig10: Typical Interior space – third floor



Fig11: Typical Interior space – first floor

1.0: INTRODUCTION

1.5: ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Many of the historic architectural features have been removed and the building interior has been modernised over the years with the additions of glazed partitions, suspended ceilings and raised floors.

The original stair handrails and spindles appear to be in good condition which we are proposing to retain.

It is unclear whether any cornices have been retained above the suspended ceilings. Any historic cornices found above the suspended ceiling are to be retained within the new proposed suspended ceiling - which is required for fire and noise protection between the flats.

Any existing window frames and window panels to be repaired and restored. Any new additional secondary glazing to be a sufficient distance from the existing window frame in order to not interfere with the existing window frame. Existing glass barriers to be retained.

Any existing timber mouldings and architraves on door frames to be repaired and restored. All historic doors to be retained and reused within the flats.

Any historic skirting boards found to be repaired and restored where possible. Extra skirting to be manufactured using a mould of the original and installed throughout all floors of the development.

Almost all internal doors and internal partitions are part of modern demountable partitions and will be removed.



Fig12: Existing stair to first & second floor



Fig13: Existing stairs to third floor

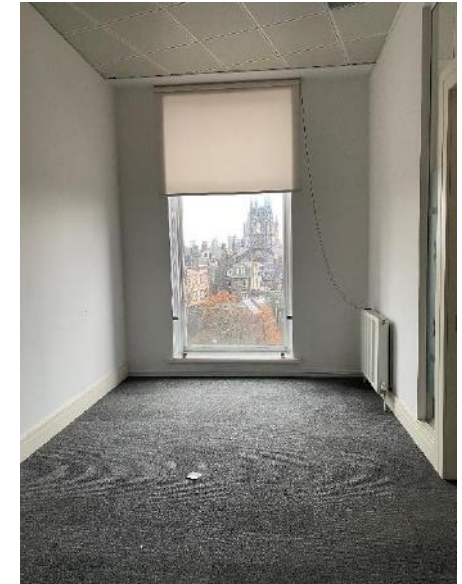


Fig14: room on first floor showing existing suspended ceiling and window barrier



Fig15: Existing raised flooring showing what appears to be original skirting.

1.0: INTRODUCTION

1.6: TOWNSCAPE CONTEXT

1-3 Union Terrace holds a prominent position in the heart of the city centre, visible from prominent routes such as Union Street, Union Terrace, Bridge Street and Denburn Road.

It also sits in directly relation to a number of notable civic buildings such as; The City Library, HMT and the Art Gallery.

Its relationship to Union Terrace Gardens will become even more prominent following the works to be completed by Aberdeen City Council, which will improve the connection between the street and park.



Fig16: Aerial view 2012



Fig17: View 1 – Union Street looking east



Fig18: View 2 – Union Street looking west



Fig19: View 3 – Union Terrace looking south



Fig20: View 4 – Bridge Street looking north

2.0: INITIAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

2.1: ACC MASTERPLAN

Aberdeen's City Council Masterplan which was published in June 2015, puts emphasis on revitalising the historic core of the city centre and encourages enrichment of Union Street as the central east-west spine through the city centre.

It highlights areas that are "less well utilised or failing to deliver the quality and scale of activity that is expected in a thriving and successful city centre". And the Denburn Valley and surroundings as part of that area.

The focus for the area of Union Terrace Gardens also plays a vital role and is as follows:

"A revitalised Union Terrace Gardens establishes itself as a key destination and the linking thread to a new residential quarter"

"The enhanced urban green space will provide multi-functional benefits; strengthening urban wildlife corridors; encouraging sustainable transport choices through the enhanced green corridor and equipping Aberdeen to be more resilient to climate change effects"



Fig21: Denburn Valley redevelopment plan (ACC, 2015)

2.0: INITIAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

2.2: DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Looking at the existing structure of the building, its prime location and the future plans for Aberdeen City Centre and Union Terrace it is clear that there is a fantastic opportunity to deliver a high quality series of proposals that will help meet the demands of 21st Century Aberdeen's local community residential premises.

In developing and refining the brief for the project along with Aberdeen City Council there are a number of considerations that must be made; primarily identifying the demand for residential properties and of what scale/mix is required in the city centre, the future security of the existing historic facades to Union Terrace & Union Street and ensuring any architectural interventions are of a quality and presentation fit for a location of such civic prominence.

Through considerable investigation and research demand for residential properties within the city centre has been identified, of varying scale 1-3 beds. The existing concrete structure would allow this to happen with minimal intervention to the existing building.



Fig22: Historic Photograph circa 1890

3.0: DESIGN PROPOSALS

3.1: PROPOSED PLANS

The external envelope of the building is of course fixed in plan, so we have looked to work within this as efficiently as possible. This includes working within the existing window opening positions, ensuring we have limited additional windows to a minimum. The elevations to Union Terrace & Union Street have been retained in their entirety and there is no proposals to adjust or modify the window positions/makeup in any way to the historic building.

We propose a partial wall infill to the west elevation, east of the main stairwell to allow flats on the upper levels to gain access to the communal hallways & stairwell. The cladding is to be standing seam zinc to match the existing third floor cladding.

We also propose the development with no parking considering the proximity to city centre and to encourage more sustainable means of transport such as walking or cycling with the possibility of joining the car club.

Bike stores are to be located at various points within the building communal areas.

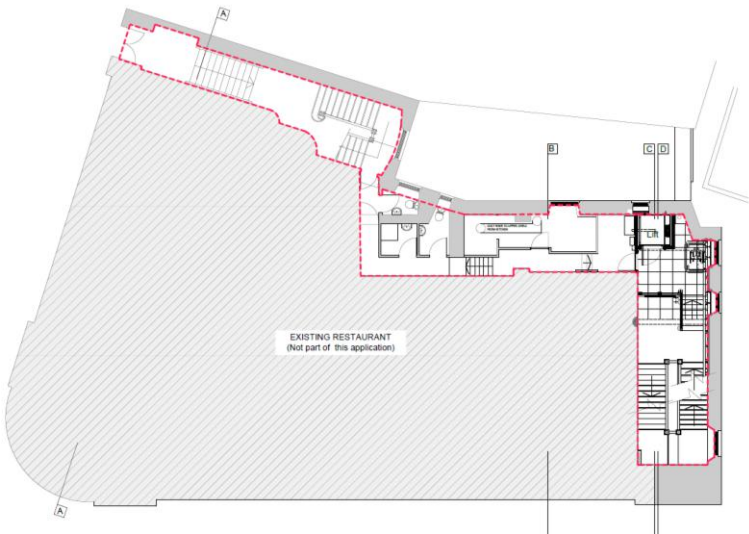


Fig26: Proposed Upper Ground Floor Plan – Not to scale

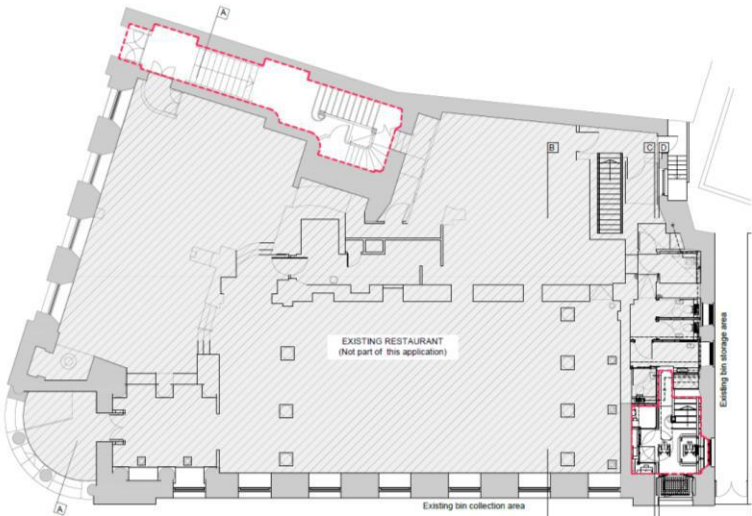


Fig25: Proposed Ground Floor Plan – Not to scale

3.0: DESIGN PROPOSALS

3.2: PROPOSED PLANS

First to third levels comprise of 15 flats: a mix of one, two and three bedroom apartments.

One bedroom apartments range from 45m² to 76m².
Two bedroom apartments range from 102m² to 110m².
The Three bedroom apartment is 158m².

The schedule of accommodation is as follows:

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed
Ground Floor	-	-	-
Upper Ground	-	-	-
First Floor	2	2	1
Upper First	-	-	-
Second Floor	4	1	-
Third Floor	5	-	-
Total	11	3	1

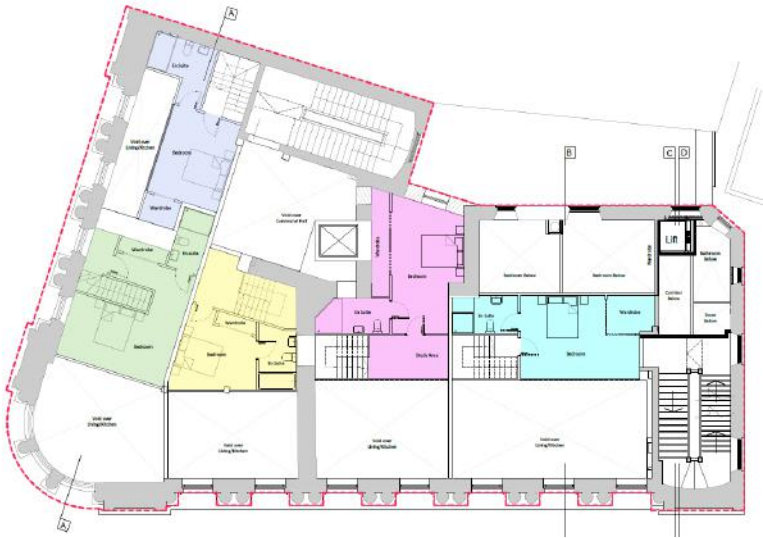


Fig28: Proposed Upper First Floor Plan – Not to scale

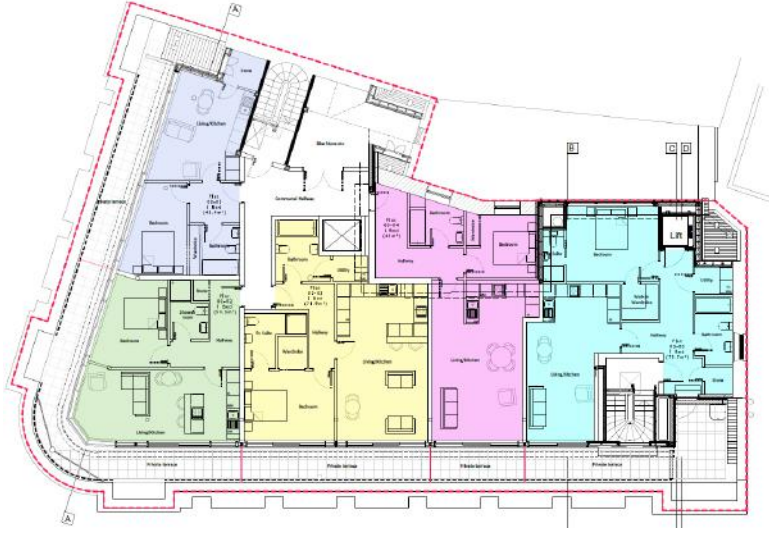


Fig30: Proposed Third Floor Plan – Not to scale



Fig27: Proposed First Floor Plan – Not to scale



Fig29: Proposed Second Floor Plan – Not to scale

3.0: DESIGN PROPOSALS

3.3: PROPOSED ALTERATIONS

Historic building windows are to remain as existing with additional internal secondary glazing as required to reduce noise to flats from Union Street and Union Terrace. We propose a partial wall infill to the west elevation, east of the main stairwell to allow flats on the upper levels to gain access to the communal hallways & stairwell. The cladding is to be standing seam zinc to match the existing third floor cladding. 6 new windows are proposed also, these are to be alu-clad windows to match existing third floor windows.

Curtain walling on the third floor to be altered to include thin framed aluminium sliding doors & powder coated aluminium louvred panels - RAL7021 for access to the amenity terraced areas. The views from the terrace gives panoramic views across the whole city centre of Aberdeen.



Fig31: Panoramic views of the city from the third floor terraces

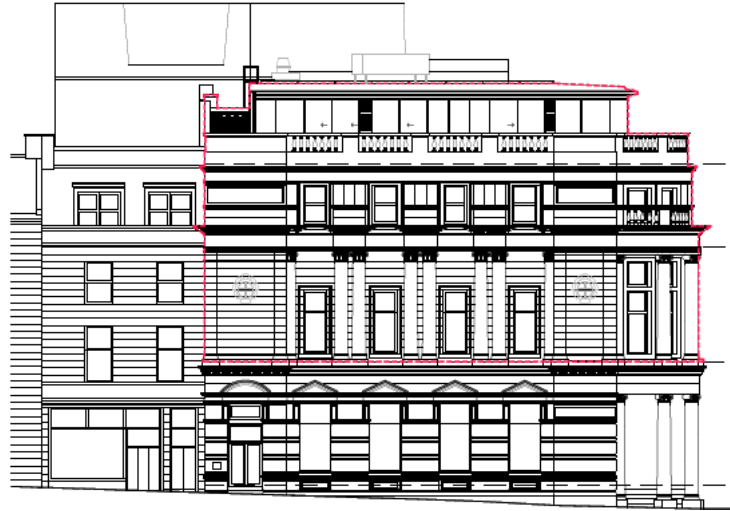


Fig32: Proposed south elevation - NTS

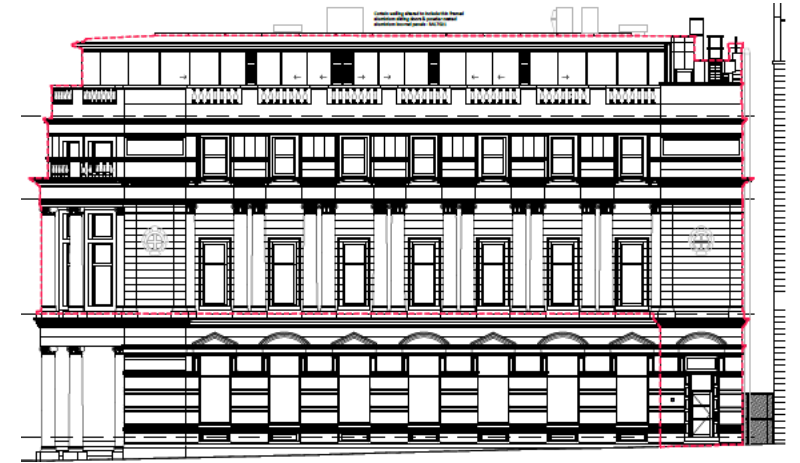


Fig33: Proposed east elevation - NTS

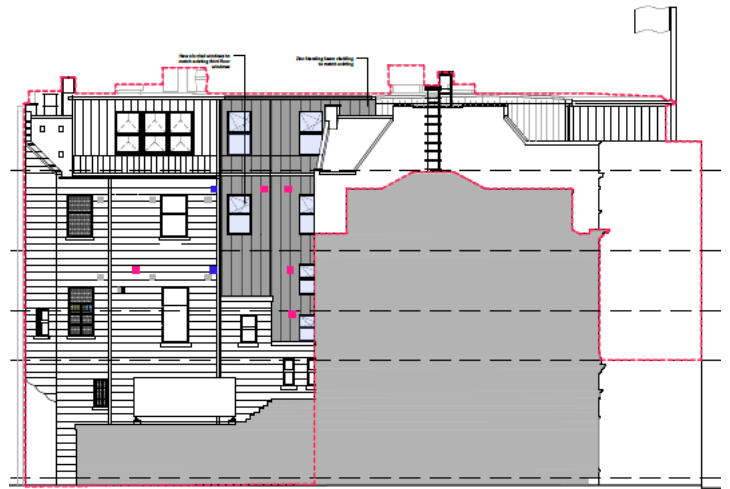


Fig34: Proposed west elevation - NTS



Fig35: Proposed north elevation - NTS

3.0: DESIGN PROPOSALS

3.4: PROPOSED MATERIALS

We are proposing to use the following mix of materials:

- Zinc standing seam metal cladding to match existing.
- Alu-clad windows to match existing third floor windows.
- Retention of all existing historic windows.

We propose this palette of contemporary materials which are both functional in their aesthetic but also used in a sophisticated manner and match the existing third floor extension.

Using the above mix of materials connects the infill to the existing building whilst creating contemporary apartments.



Fig36: Existing part west elevation showing existing zinc standing seam cladding and alu-clad windows



Fig37: Existing third floor showing west elevation alu-clad windows and zinc standing seam cladding outside.

4.0: CONCLUSION

4.1: PROPOSAL SUMMARY

In conclusion we believe these proposals form the foundation of what we are confident following further development and consideration which will result in an exemplar of 21st Century housing in the Aberdeen City Centre.

This position both aesthetically and geographically within the city make it a prime opportunity for a considered residential development on the upper floors.

Any historic architectural features found throughout the upper floors are to be retained and restored where possible. Any cornices found above the suspended ceiling to be retained above the new proposed suspended ceiling.

Curtain walling on the third floor to be altered to provide amenity to the third floor flats with panoramic views across the city and onto the Union Terrace Gardens.

The flats within are unique and of a spatial quality that is generous and well developed, whilst the exterior is strong, considered and civic in its presentation.



Fig38: Existing building.